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4755 Kingsview Lane North
Plymouth, MN 55446
January 11, 2003

Mr. Michael K. Powell
Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Mr. Powell,

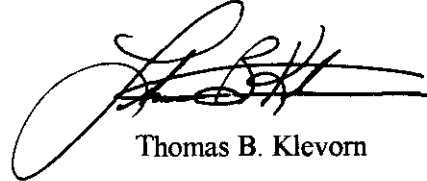
I write to express my views concerning two issues that are currently under review by the Federal Communication Commission (FCC). They are *ownership of American news media and* local telephone competition. Both issues are vital to the health and well being of our democratic government and I ask that you consider my thoughts carefully prior to taking any final decisions on either one.

The ability of the American citizenry to take part in public debate depends on access to independent and diverse sources of news and information. The FCC's current proposal to eliminate restrictions on how many news media outlets one company can own, both nationally and in one city, ignores the public's interest in diverse sources of news and information. History suggests that concentrating information in the hands of a few, by whatever means and for whatever reasons, is damaging to the democratic process. In my view the FCC proposal outlines the economic benefits of eliminating ownership restrictions without taking into consideration the true cost to the nation (**reduced access to independent and diverse sources of news and information**) of such action. I urge you to reconsider this proposal and ask that the FCC maintain news media ownership restrictions as they currently exist.

With the Telecommunications Act of 1996 (1996 Act), Congress envisioned fundamental, pro-competitive changes in the telecommunications markets. This included competition at the level of local telephone dial tone access. Recent news regarding FCC plans to essentially scrap local competition flies directly in the face of Congressional and essentially, voter intent. Since passage of the 1996 Act, historically local phone companies have resisted competition at every step. Whether through illegal marketing practices as in the case of Qwest or through continuing legal action, they have been very effective in slowing or stopping competition for local telephone dial tone service. In many markets, local telephone competition is just now starting to appear. Any FCC action now, such as denying possible competitors low priced access to existing equipment owned by historically local phone companies, would stifle competition and effectively reward anti-competitive behavior practiced by local phone companies like SBC, Qwest, etc. over the past seven years. I urge you to reconsider FCC plans to eliminate low-priced access to existing local company equipment or any other action that would jeopardize true competition for local dial tone access at the local level. With recent reports that Verizon, a historically local phone company, is now number three in long distance telephone service nationally, it is clear that in the long distance market, the 1996 Act works for the historically local companies. It is well beyond time for all consumers to see the benefits of such

competition at the local level and it is certainly not unreasonable to expect historically local telephone companies to actively participate in free and open markets. Rather than wasting time and money making excuses for a monopoly business model long ago deemed unnecessary by the legislative and judicial branches of our government, they would have the opportunity in a truly competitive market to demonstrate the value of their products and services to consumers

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. B. Klevorn', with a large, sweeping loop on the left side.

Thomas B. Klevorn

Cc: Senator Norm Coleman
Senator Mark Dayton
Congressman Jim Ramstad
LeRoy Koppendraye, Chair of the Minnesota Public Services Commission